



# NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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Contact: Monica Allen  
(301) 713-2370

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## NOAA SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON NEW MEASURES TO ADDRESS IUU FISHING AND BYCATCH

NOAA Fisheries Service will hold three public meetings in early July to gather public comment on the development of national rules to address illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities and the unintentional catch – or bycatch – of protected living marine resources, including dolphins, turtles and other species.

The public meetings will be Monday, July 2, from 3 to 5 p.m. at the National Marine Fisheries Service Headquarters Science Center, SSMC4, 1310 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; Thursday, July 5, from 3 to 5 p.m. at the NMFS Southwest Regional Office, 501 West Ocean Boulevard, Room 3470, Long Beach, Calif.; and on July 5, from 3 to 5 p.m. at the NMFS Northwest Regional Office, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Building 9 Auditorium, Seattle, Wash.

The reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 2006 calls for the United States to implement new measures to address IUU fishing and the bycatch of protected living marine resources. The act requires a biennial report on those foreign nations whose vessels are engaged in IUU fishing, or fishing that results in bycatch of protected living marine resources. The act also requires that procedures be established to certify whether nations identified in this biennial report are taking corrective actions.

“We need strong rules to address the significant problem of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing,” said Dr. William T. Hogarth, director of NOAA Fisheries Service. “It is widely recognized that illegal fishing and the bycatch of living marine resources undermines national and international efforts to conserve and manage fish stocks and marine ecosystems. This type of rogue fishing can lead to the collapse of stocks.”

The public meetings will solicit input on the procedure for certifying whether a country with a fishing fleet has engaged in these activities. Such a certification could eventually lead to import prohibitions and other measures.

The United States and other countries are facing an increase in fishing that is not consistent with applicable laws and regulations, including fishing rules adopted at both national and international level. These fishing practices include reflagging of fishing vessels to evade controls, fishing in another nation’s waters without authorization, failure to report catches and the transshipment of illegally caught fish.

IUU fishing undermines the benefits of fisheries management and contributes to overfishing. Such fishing practices damage the resources, hurt nations’ economies and the communities and people who depend on these resources for their livelihoods.

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The unintentional catch of protected living marine resources, called bycatch, limits the ability of the U.S. and other nations to conserve protected living marine resources. This can have significant negative consequences for marine ecosystems and biodiversity.

Some examples of bycatch include incidentally caught sea turtles and marine mammals in fishing gear. Without proper measures to address bycatch, fishing can lead to serious injury or mortality of these protected species.

Written comments may be sent to [0648-AV51@noaa.gov](mailto:0648-AV51@noaa.gov) until July 26, 2007.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is celebrating 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the Survey of the Coast in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Commission of Fish and Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 60 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources and their habitat through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries Service provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public. To learn more about NOAA Fisheries Service, please visit: [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov).

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